

## Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION SS-25

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FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6376

S E C R E T BUENOS AIRES 5169

EXDIS

E.O. 11652 GDS  
TAGS SHUM, AR  
SUBJECT HUMAN RIGHTS; AMBASSADOR'S CHAT WITH FONMIN

1. I MET WITH FOREIGN MINISTER MONTES AT 10:00 AT HIS  
OFFICE TODAY (WED) JULY 5 REFERENCE MY CONSULTATION TRIP TO  
DEPT WITHIN A FEW DAYS. HE RECEIVED ME COURTEOUSLY BUT HIS  
SOMBER MOOD INDICATED HIS UNHAPPINESS. HE AVOIDED ANY PRE-  
LIMINARY CHIT CHAT AND ASKED WHAT I HAD IN MIND.

2. I INQUIRED ABOUT HIS RECENT WASHINGTON VISIT TO WHICH  
HE REPLIED IN SUCCINCT AND CLEAR LANGUAGE AS FOLLOWS: MONTES  
DESCRIBED HIS WASHINGTON TRIP A "FIASCO". HE STATED UNFORTUN-  
ATELY ARGENTINA IS LOOKED UPON AT THE STATE DEPARTMENT LEVEL  
AS A THIRD RATE COUNTRY. WITHOUT MENTIONING ANY SPECIFIC  
COUNTRY, HE ADDED MOST LA COUNTRIES RECEIVE ALL EXPECTED  
COURTESIES BUT MONTES EMPHASIZED IN HIS JUDGEMENT ARGENTINA  
DOES NOT. IT WAS APPARENT HE WAS ALLUDING TO HIS INABILITY  
TO MEET WITH SECRETARY VANCE.

3. MONTES THEN PROCEEDED TO DESCRIBE THE NEWSOM-ALLARA  
MEETING AS A DISASTER. HE THEN EMPHATICALLY STATED  
ARGENTINA IS NOW FULLY CONVINCED IT CANNOT DO BUSINESS WITH  
THE USG, AND INSTEAD GOA IS MOVING TOWARDS JAPAN AND OTHER  
POWERS WHERE THEIR DIGNITY IS RESPECTED AND APPRECIATED.

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COMMENT: I HAVE NEVER SEEN THE FOREIGN MINISTER AS SOLEMN  
AS WHEN HE MADE THIS STATEMENT. HE WAS JUST DEAD SERIOUS.  
END COMMENT. I THEN INTERJECTED TELLING MONTES THAT USG  
WANTED TO CONTINUE ITS TRADITIONAL FRIENDLY RELATIONS WITH  
ARGENTINA. I EXPLAINED TO HIM OF THE DIFFERENT ROLES PLAYED  
BY THE EXECUTIVE, CONGRESS AND THE GENERAL AMERICAN PUBLIC.  
MONTES EXPRESSED HIS KNOWLEDTE OF THE HUMPHREY/KENNEDY AMEND-

MENT AND ALSO THE HARKINS AMENDMENT. MONTES SAID HE APPRECIATED THE PRESSURES FACED BY THE STATE DEPARTMENT BUT THAT THIS DIDN'T CHANGE THE END RESULT AS FAR AS GOA-US RELATIONS WENT.

4. MONTES ALSO SAID HE ALSO APPRECIATED MY SITUATION AS BEING "ENTRE LA ESPADA Y LA PARED" - I.E., BETWEEN "THE DEVIL AND THE DEEP BLUE SEA". HE ADDED HE REGRETTED SEEING GOA-US RELATIONS AT SUCH A LOW EBB BUT HE FEARED THIS WAS ONE OF THE UNHAPPIEST SITUATIONS HE HAD EXPERIENCED IN HIS CAREER AS FOREIGN MINISTER.

5. I TOLD MONTES DIALOGUE BETWEEN HIS OFFICE AND IAHRG WAS VERY MUCH THEIR PRIVATE DOMAIN. I EMPHASIZED THAT UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES WOULD WE WANT TO VIOLATE THAT RELATIONSHIP. HE REPLIED SAYING THAT THE INVITATION HAD BEEN EXTENDED TO IAHRG BUT HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION REPLIED WITH A SERIES OF NINE QUESTIONS. I INQUIRED IF THESE QUESTIONS PRESENTED A PROBLEM. MONTES ANSWERED BY SAYING HE FELT INTERROGATORIES WERE NOT MADE IN GOOD FAITH. I THEN QUESTIONED IF IT WANTED TRUE THAT INTERNATIONAL RED CROSS AS WELL AS AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL HAD ACCESS TO PRISONS. HE REPLIED IN THE AFFIRMATIVE. MONTES THEN STATED DECISION OF WHETHER OR NOT TO COMPLY WITH IAHRG REQUEST WAS UP TO PRESIDENT VIDELA. HE TOLD ME HE HAD AN APPOINTMENT WITH THE PRESIDENT WITHIN A HALF HOUR.

6. I STRESSED TO MONTES THAT TIME WAS OF THE ESSENCE. I ADDED OCTOBER 1 WAS A DATE MOST FAMILIAR TO ALL MILITARY BRANCHES.  
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HE AGREED. I SUGGESTED A SERIOUS EFFORT SHOULD BE MADE TO COME TO TERMS WITH IAHRG. I EMPHASIZED MILITARY TRAINING WAS VERY MUCH CONTINGENT ON ACCEPTANCE OF THE GOA INVITATION BY IAHRG. I ALSO EXPLAINED THERE WAS NO NEED TO WAIT UNTIL OCTOBER 25, BUT COMMUNICATION COULD BE HAD WITH IAHRG AS SOON AS TOMORROW OR THE NEXT DAY. MONTES AGAIN REPEATED IT WAS UP TO PRESIDENT VIDELA TO MAKE FINAL DECISION.

7. THROUGHOUT OUR CONVERSATION MONTES KEPT REPEATING IT WAS JUST IMPOSSIBLE TO DO BUSINESS WITH USG AND THE GOA MUST GO ELSEWHERE TO MEET ITS NEEDS.

8. I CONCLUDED BY STATING USG WISHES TO HAVE FRIENDLY AND PRODUCTIVE RELATIONS WITH ARGENTINA BUT THERE WERE STRONG PRESSURES FROM CONGRESS AND THE GENERAL AMERICAN PUBLIC. MONTES THEN STATED HE COULD NOT UNDERSTAND HOW THE STATE DEPARTMENT COULD MEET WITH OSCAR ALENDE, A TREACHEROUS POLITICAL HACK AND A RENOWNED ANTI-AMERICAN. FOREIGN MINISTER SAID ALENDE MEETS WITH UNDER SECRETARY NEWSOM FOR FIFTY-FIVE MINUTES AND WE, THE ARGENTINES, HAVE TO BEG TO MEET WITH ANY ONE HIGHER THAN A MINOR OFFICIAL. HE SAID HE FELT THE STATE DEPARTMENT VALUES AND PRIORITIES WERE DISTORTED.

9. MONTES' FINAL STATEMENT WAS THERE MUST BE A RETURN TO A  
RULE OF LAW IN ARGENTINA. HE SAID "I RECOGNIZE WE CAN'T CONTINUE  
WITH SAME OPERATIONAL METHODS USED WHEN TERRORISTS WERE IN THEIR  
FULL BLOOM". HE CONCLUDED SAYING "ARGENTINA IS MOVING TO A  
GOVERNMENT OF LAWS PERHAPS NOT AS FAST AS WERE EXPECTED TO BY OTHERS.  
"

10. AT A MILITARY CEREMONY AT NOON I RAN INTO GENERAL VIOLA.  
HE SAID HE HAD DISCUSSED GOA-US RELATIONS WITH PRESIDENT VIDELA  
AND HE HAD SOME COMMENTS FOR ME FROM VIDELA. I SHALL MEET WITH  
VIOLA AT 1800 TODAY (WED).

1. LATER I MET UNDER SECRETARY ALLARA AT VENEZUELAN INDEPEND-  
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ENCE DAY RECEPTION. HE CORNERED ME AND TOLD ME THE MEETING  
WITH NEWSOM WAS AN UTTER FAILURE. HE SAID USG HAD BEEN APPLYING  
HUMPHREY/KENNEDY BILL BEFORE IT TAKES EFFECT. HE STRESSED THIS  
WAS NOT A GESTURE OF FRIENDSHIP FROM A COUNTRY PROFESSING TO  
BE A FRIEND. ALLARA EMOTIONALLY SAID I ALWAYS TOLD GOA OF OUR  
DESIRE TO KEEP STRONG FRIENDLY TIES WITH THEM, BUT THE NEW HARKIN  
AMMENDMENT IS NOT YET IN EFFECT AND ALREADY USG HAS INSTRUCTED  
EXIM BANK NOT TO HONOR GOA REQUESTS BECAUSE OF POSSIBLE  
EFFECTS OF HARKIN AMENDMENT. ALLARA LOOKED AT ME STERNLY  
AND SAID YOU TELL ME AND MY GOVERNMENT THE USG IS NOT  
ARBITRARY AND YET YOUR GOVERNMENT IS APPLYING LAWS THAT  
ARE NOT YET IN EFFECT.

12. IT BECAME OBVIOUS TO RECEPTION GUESTS THAT ALLARA AND  
I WERE HAVING A SERIOUS DISCUSSION SO WE FELT IT BEST NOT  
TO CONTINUE. I AGREED TO MEET WITH HIM ON MY RETURN FROM  
WASHDC.  
CASTRO

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## Message Attributes

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